

The Monthly Musical Record.

MARCH 1, 1875.

BRITISH ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY.

SINCE the last number of THE MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD was issued, the Publishers have made inquiries concerning the professional qualifications of the conductor of the British Orchestral Society, and the result thereof is that they retract the comments on the conductor of the orchestra of which complaint was made. In so doing, the Publishers desire to state that they freely and unreservedly take upon themselves to withdraw the objectionable comments, and that they tender to the conductor in question their apologies for the same.

W. STERNDALE BENNETT.

WHEN a month ago we wrote about a performance, at the Crystal Palace, of Sir W. Sterndale Bennett's symphony in G minor, we had little idea that before the issue of our next number the esteemed composer of this fine work would be no longer among us. On the day previous to this performance he was smitten down by an illness from which he never rose up again. On the very day fortnight after listening to his symphony with such pleasure, we accompanied him, but with what different feelings, to his last resting-place upon earth!

So full have been the biographical memoirs and the accounts of his funeral which have appeared in the daily papers, that we feel we need only recur to these points in the briefest possible manner.

William Sterndale Bennett was born at Sheffield, on the 13th of April, 1816. His father, Robert Bennett, was organist at one of the churches there. When but three years old he had the misfortune to lose both his parents. His grandfather, a lay clerk in the University choir of Cambridge, accordingly took charge of him and brought him up there. At eight years of age (1824) he was entered a chorister at King's College; and about two years afterwards was sent to the Royal Academy of Music, where, studying principally under the late Dr. Crotch, Mr. Cipriani Potter, and Mr. W. H. Holmes, he remained a pupil for upwards of ten years. Here he at once gained distinction both as a pianist and a composer, producing symphonies, overtures, pianoforte concertos, &c., with remarkable rapidity. In 1835 he made his first appearance at the Philharmonic, playing his own concerto in E flat, produced the year before at the Royal Academy of Music; and in 1836, with a view to further study, he went to Germany. In Leipzig he not only won the friendship and esteem of Mendelssohn and Schumann, but, by those of his works which were brought to a hearing there, the good opinion of the German musical world. It was in Leipzig that he composed "The Wood-Nymphs," perhaps his finest overture, which, after being heard there for the first time on the 29th January, 1839, was given without delay by the Philharmonic Society shortly after his return to England the same year. He now settled down to the ordinary life of a professor in England, devoting himself more to teaching and playing at concerts than to composition, for which in those days there was probably

less encouragement to a native composer than even at the present. In his capacity of pianoforte teacher he found the fullest occupation, and it was in this way that he principally busied himself even to within a few weeks before his death. Though teaching for ten hours a day at his busiest time, he nevertheless found time to do a good deal more in other ways for the advancement of musical art in England than, we think, he has generally been credited with. Thus, in 1849, he instituted a Bach Society, of which he remained the honorary conductor till its dissolution in 1862; it was at his instigation that Bach's *Passions-musik*, Christmas oratorio, &c., were first brought to a public hearing in England by that society. Regret has often been expressed that he did not more devote himself to composition. That he might have done so with advantage both to himself and to the musical world in general, he proved by the ready and satisfactory manner in which he produced works required for sundry special occasions. It is enough to name his cantata, *The May Queen*, composed for the festival which he conducted at Leeds in 1858; the ode, "Uplift a Thousand Voices," for the opening of the International Exhibition of 1862; in the same year an ode for the installation of the Duke of Devonshire as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and the overture, *Paradise and the Peri*, for the jubilee of the Philharmonic Society; and for the Birmingham Festival of 1867 the oratorio, *The Woman of Samaria*. In 1856 he was elected to the Musical Professorship of the University of Cambridge, which conferred upon him the degree of Mus. Doc., and in due course that of M.A. In 1870 he was made a D.C.L., at Oxford, and in the following year was knighted by Her Majesty the Queen. In 1856 he was appointed conductor of the Philharmonic Society, a post which he retained for eleven years. In 1868 he succeeded the late Mr. C. Lucas as Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, which institution he did as much to advance in this capacity as he did honour to it while a pupil. To fulfilling the duties of this important post and to private teaching he principally devoted the latter years of his life.

Sir W. Sterndale Bennett died on the 1st ult.; on the 6th ult. he was buried in Westminster Abbey. A more fitting resting-place among England's worthies, in close proximity to the graves of England's greatest musicians, Purcell and Croft, could not have been found for him. Nor could a more impressive ceremony have been devised than the musical service which accompanied the consignment of his mortal remains to the tomb. In addition to the usual burial service of Croft and Purcell, this consisted of the unaccompanied quartet, "God is a Spirit," from *The Woman of Samaria*; a portion of Handel's anthem, "His body is buried in peace;" and as organ voluntaries, "Mourn, ye afflicted," from *Judas Maccabeus*, and the Dead March in *Saul*. Regarded as a musical performance, the rendering of these imperishable works by a select body of fifty-four voices, drawn from the choirs of Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, the Temple, the Chapel Royal, and Lincoln's Inn, under the general direction of Mr. Montem Smith, and with Mr. Turlé at the organ, was one of high excellence. Of the vast concourse of people that witnessed the mournful procession both from within and without the Abbey, and which was represented by every grade of society, from the representatives of Royalty downwards, it seems no exaggeration to say that the greater number were attracted by the desire to pay a last tribute to the memory of our greatest composer rather than to view a public spectacle. One came away with the words still ringing in one's ears:—

"His body is buried in peace,
But his name liveth evermore."

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RAFF'S SYMPHONIES.

BY EBENEZER FROUT, B.A.

AMONG living German composers there are three who, by common consent, are admitted to stand in the front rank, and to be, like Saul the son of Kish, a head and shoulders taller than all their fellows. Many of my readers will anticipate me when I name as these musical chiefs—Wagner, Brahms, and Raff. Whatever views may be held as to Wagner's art-theories, or as to his music, there can be no two opinions as to the fact that his operas immeasurably transcend in importance any other dramatic music of the present day; while as a vocal writer a similar pre-eminence may be claimed for the composer of the "Deutsches Requiem," the "Triumphlied," and the "Schicksalslied." Brahms also excels in the department of chamber music, as witness his stringed sextets and his pianoforte quartets, though in this last province of art he is not without many rivals and some peers. Raff is so voluminous a writer, and so equally conversant with every style of composition, that it is difficult to name his speciality. In pianoforte, chamber, and orchestral music he is equally at home; but it is in this last direction that he shows his superiority to his contemporaries. Quartets, trios, or pianoforte pieces equal to his may be easily named; but as a symphonic writer he stands at present absolutely alone. His works of this class are, taking them as a whole, unquestionably the greatest that have been written since those of Schumann.

In this country but little opportunity has been afforded of making the acquaintance of Raff's symphonies. Only one, the "Lenore," has yet been heard in London, having been produced for the first time at the Crystal Palace concerts on the 14th of November last. Those who were present will remember the sensation created by its performance. It was to our audiences a new revelation of power, for which only those few who were previously acquainted with the work were prepared. A natural desire was excited to know more of the compositions of a man who could produce such music; and I have several times since been asked if I could give the readers of this paper any information about the other symphonies from the same pen. I propose, therefore, in the present series of articles to analyse the whole of the six symphonies which Raff has at present written; but before entering upon this task, it will be of service to my readers to make a few general remarks on the composer's symphonic style, as well as to give a very brief outline of his biography.

Joachim Raff was born at Lachen, in the Canton of Schwytz, in Switzerland, on the 27th of May, 1822, and is therefore at present in the 53rd year of his age. Like many other distinguished composers, he was not designed by his parents for the profession of music, and on the completion of his education in his eighteenth year he took a situation as a teacher. Meanwhile, however, without receiving any systematic instruction in music, he had studied the piano, violin, and organ, and had also made various essays in composition. Some of these last he sent, in 1843, to Mendelssohn, who recommended them to Breitkopf and Härtel. Their acceptance by this eminent firm was the turning-point in Raff's career. Henceforth, contrary to the wishes of his parents, he resolved to devote himself entirely to music. He passed through at first the usual period of struggle, till Liszt, during a concert-tour through Switzerland, in 1845, made his acquaintance, and generously took him by the hand. Raff accompanied the great pianist to Germany, and in the following year at Cologne made the personal acquaintance of Mendelssohn, who invited him to Leipzig to pursue his theoretical studies. The plan, however, fell

through in consequence of Mendelssohn's death on the 4th of November, 1847. From Cologne, Raff went to Stuttgart, where he first met with Hans von Bülow; and thence to Weimar, where Liszt was settled as "Hofcapellmeister." In 1856 he removed to Wiesbaden, where he has since resided. His life, as will be seen from the above sketch, has not been particularly eventful; further details would consist mainly of the dates of his numerous compositions. For the last twenty years his production has been incessant. He seldom if ever plays in public, and his time is occupied entirely with teaching and writing.

The number of Raff's published works already extends to about Op. 190. This includes six symphonies, one suite, five overtures, and a march for orchestra, a violin concerto, a piano concerto, five stringed quartets, one piano quintet, four piano trios, five sonatas for piano and violin, and one (if not more) for piano and violoncello, at least two hundred pianoforte pieces, an opera (*Dame Kobold*), a psalm, various cantatas, some fifty or sixty songs, &c. &c. This long list is by no means complete, but from it some idea may be formed both as to the extent and versatility of Raff's genius.

It would not be reasonable to expect that a man who writes so much should always be at his best; and in truth Raff, like other very prolific authors, is at times wanting in self-criticism. Instances of this will be met with in the course of the present analyses; but after making all deductions on this score, enough will remain to prove him a man of very remarkable power—the more remarkable when it is remembered that he is a self-taught musician.

The six symphonies of Raff are the following:—

1. "An das Vaterland" (To the Fatherland), a prize symphony, Op. 96. (J. Schuberth & Co.: Leipzig and New York.)
2. Symphony in C major, Op. 140. (Mainz: Schott.)
3. "Im Walde" (In the Forest), symphony in F, Op. 153. (Leipzig: F. Kistner.)
4. Symphony in G minor, Op. 167. (J. Schuberth & Co.: Leipzig and New York.)
5. "Lenore," symphony in E major, Op. 177. (Leipzig and Weimar: Robert Seitz.)
6. Symphony in D minor, Op. 189, bearing the motto "Gelebt, gestrebt, gelitten, gestritten, gestorben, umworben." (Berlin and Posen: Bote & Bock.)

The first point that strikes the student of these symphonies is their individuality. They possess, it is true, that family likeness which shows them to be the productions of the same brain; but each has such distinctive features that it is no more possible to confound one with another than it would be to confuse Beethoven's "Eroica" symphony with his C minor, or Mendelssohn's "Scotch" with his "Italian." So far as I am acquainted with Raff's music (and I must confess to only knowing a comparatively small proportion of it) he seldom if ever repeats himself. His ideas are by no means of always equal merit; but at all events the well never runs dry, and inexhaustible fluency seems to be one of the composer's striking characteristics.

I have just said that Raff's ideas are by no means of always equal merit, and this brings me to the next point to notice—the nature of his melodic invention. The composer has in a very decided degree the gift of *tune*; his themes are invariably clear, intelligible, and easily remembered. Those in major keys, especially, have what, for want of a better expression, I may call a certain "home-lieness" about them; they are almost always diatonic rather than chromatic, and are frequently constructed almost entirely on the scale, sometimes even merely on

the intervals of the common chord. They are sometimes commonplace, occasionally even trivial, but almost always pleasing, and frequently "ear-catching." Moreover (and this is a point of great importance), they are invariably well suited for thematic development, and this is unquestionably one of Raff's strongest points. I have no hesitation in saying that since Beethoven nobody has equalled Raff in the absolute mastery of thematic treatment. By his skill in this respect he frequently succeeds in constructing an interesting movement out of most unpromising materials; and when, in addition, he has been happy in the choice of his themes, he produces music worthy to rank with the masterpieces of our art.

No less remarkable than his power of thematic development, is his complete command of all the intricacies of counterpoint. Fugue, canon, augmentation, diminution—all seem equally easy to him. Some examples of these will be met with hereafter; I may just refer here to one not taken from his symphonies. In the sixth variation of the slow movement of his sextet for strings, Op. 178, is to be found a double canon in the octave in six parts, which is a perfect model of ingenuity. The subjects are announced by two violoncellos, taken up in the octave one bar later by two violas, and yet one bar later in the double octave above by two violins, and the canon is continued in the strictest possible manner for twenty-eight bars without being in the least laboured or stiff. Sebastian Bach himself need not have been ashamed to sign the page; and this is the work of a self-taught man!

It will be noticed that four of the six symphonies given in the list above have definite titles attached to them. Raff shows a special partiality for programme music; and the question as to the limits within which it may be artistically employed naturally suggests itself. The safest canon to apply seems to be that laid down by Beethoven in his programme of the Pastoral Symphony: "Mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei," rather expression of emotion than painting; and it will be seen later that just where Raff attempts actual music-painting he is the least successful. It is a fact, however, not without significance as bearing on the general question, that precisely those two symphonies which have no programme at all—the second and the fourth—are musically the finest of the series. "Absolute" music can still hold its own against "music on a poetic basis."

Having specified some of the excellencies of these works, it remains to say a few words as to their defects. One of these has already been incidentally mentioned—the want of care in the selection of themes. Of course, it must not be supposed that this is the rule rather than the exception; still it is too often the case that Raff seems to take the first series of notes that comes into his head, and to show what can be done with them. Of that careful revision and retouching of his subjects, of which Beethoven's sketch-books afford such remarkable instances, there is little or no trace in these symphonies. But a more serious fault is a general tendency to diffuseness. Here it may be well to stop and ask what diffuseness really is. It is not mere length. It would never occur to any one, for instance, to call the first movement of the "Eroica" symphony diffuse, though nobody would dispute that it is very long. But its extension is justified by the importance of its subject-matter. Diffuseness is rather undue length in proportion to the actual amount of the musical thought. It may take two forms—either of absolute repetition of passages already introduced, or of over-development of the themes. Of the great masters of the past, Schubert is undoubtedly the most faulty in this respect. Nobody, I hope, will accuse me of depreciating the composer in saying this. Schubert has no

more enthusiastic admirer than myself; but admiration should not cloud the judgment, and it is impossible at times not to feel how much his music would have been benefited by judicious pruning. His great symphony in C, for instance, is one of the most purely enjoyable works ever written; and yet it contains examples of both the kinds of diffuseness mentioned above. In the first movement there are several passages which are repeated note for note, while in the andante and finale we find the themes treated at such length that only the great genius and wonderful melodic inspiration of the composer prevents their becoming tedious. It has often been remarked that this tendency to diffuseness is characteristic of the new German school of musicians. Is it perhaps an attempt to enlarge the Beethoven forms? By all means let composers enlarge them if they can; but in so doing let the ideas be worthy of the frame-work in which they are enclosed. The plan of trying to construct with insufficient material a movement which shall in dimensions outdo the Beethoven allegro, is like endeavouring to fill a quart bottle with a pint of wine; water must be put in to supply the deficiency.

With the exception of No. 4 in G minor, Raff's symphonies are all rather (and some very) long. A table of comparison is given here of the number of bars in various well-known and representative works. I have chosen Mozart's longest symphony, two of Beethoven's longer ones, and the most developed of Mendelssohn and Schumann, in each case excluding all repeats. It must be understood that merely an approximate idea of the comparative lengths can thus be given, as much depends on the length of the bars. To give one example—the scherzo of Beethoven's seventh symphony contains 633 bars, that of Raff's No. 1 only 504; but the latter is in six-eight time with two beats in the bar, while the former is in three-quarter with only one; besides which, there are 147 bars of repeat in Raff's movement, which on the whole would take nearly if not quite twice as long to play as Beethoven's. Still the table will give some idea of the relative proportions of the various works:—

	First movt. (with or without introduction).	Slow movt.	Minuet or scherzo.	Finale.	Total.
Mozart, "Jupiter.".....	313	101	87	493	994
Beethoven, "Eroica.".....	593	249	455	462	1759
No. 7.	449	278	633	474	1834
Mendelssohn, "Scotch.".....	521	150	37	490	1434
Schumann, No. 2.	391	128	397	500	1406
Raff, No. 1.	631	266	504	950*	2351
No. 2.	537	201	334	471	1543
No. 3.	642	194	385	671	1892
No. 4.	437	239	167	400	1243
No. 5.	437	250	345†	478	1510
No. 6.	606	201	429	548	1784

* In two movements. † March.

(To be continued.)

RELICS OF ROSSINI.

BY OSCAR COMETTANT.

ON my way back from a journey through Italy, I paused for a few hours at Bologna, where I was in hopes of being able to see two curiosities which were most attractive to an inquirer like myself—the authentic manuscript of the *Pianto d'Armonia* on the death of Orpheus, and the other, also an autograph, that of *Almaviva*, which afterwards became the *Barbiere di Siviglia*. I was received at the Lyceum of Bologna by the learned and amiable director of that institution, Sig. Gaetano Gaspari, who showed me some of the curiosities of the valuable library, numbering some 800 volumes, attached to the Lyceum. It was not without emotion that I found myself in the very hall in

which Rossini, when yet a child, used to pore over the manuscripts of Haydn and Mozart, of whose quartets he arranged about a dozen in score. I also visited the rooms in which the future author of *William Tell* pursued his musical studies, which were more serious than is generally supposed. Having consulted the various entries in the register relative to Rossini, I became convinced that all biographies hitherto published of the illustrious composer contain many chronological errors. Rossini was received at the musical Lyceum of Bologna in 1806, as violoncello pupil in the class of D. Vincenzo Cavedagni. It was not until the following year that he became the pupil of Mattei, although still remaining under the tuition of Cavedagni. In 1808 we find him attending three classes, those of counterpoint, of violoncello, and of pianoforte, the latter under the direction of Zanetta. In 1809 and 1810 he gave up performing on these instruments, to consecrate himself entirely to the study of harmony and of composition. I asked to be allowed to examine the manuscript of the *Pianto d'Armonia*, of which all biographers have spoken without having either seen it or heard it. Sig. Gaspari gave the order to have this first work of the great master fetched from the study which he had occupied, together with the documents referring to it. The score was therefore brought to me, as well as the programme of the concert given at the distribution of prizes at the Lyceum of Bologna, on which occasion the *Pianto d'Armonia* was performed for the first time. I think it interesting to give in its entirety the programme of this concert of pupils, which marks the first triumph of Rossini, and which is not to be found in any of the biographies of the composer. It bears the date of 1808:—

1. Overture for full Orchestra Benedetto Donelli.
2. Chorus and Introduction Benedetto Donelli.
3. Sonata for Pianoforte, 4 hands Kerselek.
- Performed by Filippo Margetti and Pietro Zappi.
4. Concerto with Oboe Obligato Gavazza.
- Performed by Pietro Minozzi.
5. Vocal Trio Andrea Mencini.
- Performed by Teresa Verni, Leopoldo Augusto, and Sabbattini.
6. Trio for Violin Obligato, Violin, and Violoncello Alessandro Rola.
- Performed by Zorconi.
7. Variations for Pianoforte and Orchestra Rola.
- Performed by Domenico Ficcioli.
8. Cavatina Mencini.
- Performed by Teresa Verni.
9. Morceau d'Ensemble Gavazzi.
10. Cantata for Solo and Chorus Gioacchino Rossini.
- Performed by Agostino.
11. Sonata for Organ Donelli.

In this historical programme are printed the words of the celebrated cantata. I examined with religious curiosity the score written by him who was then but a student, and whose immortal *Barbiere* was soon to fill the world with his rising fame. The score is written in twelve staves only; the orchestra comprehends, besides the string quartet, two hautboys, two clarinets, two horns, one bassoon only, and one flute. No more: neither trumpets nor drums. In the instrumentation are noticeable corrections from the pen of Professor Mattei. In one passage he suppresses the clarinets, which are written too high, and which would evidently have given a certain crudeness to the orchestra. In the hall of the library in which I was standing with Sig. Gasparo I perceived an old square pianoforte. "Will you not sing through the cantata *a soli*?" I said to my distinguished companion—learned in everything, and more especially in music—"I will accompany you on the harpsichord." "Willingly," answered Sig. Gasparo with a good-natured smile. And we sang through the score, in such a manner as to acquire

a just idea of this celebrated work, so little known. Rossini was sixteen years old when he composed this cantata. It is simple, melodious, naturally harmonised, and well written for the voice: the first manner of Rossini's genius shines forth from every page. I noticed especially a cavatina in E flat for tenor, simply and naturally harmonised, "O le spietate furie," which would not be out of place in *Tancredi*.

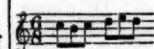
Many biographers of Rossini have wondered what could be that symphony which is indicated in the general catalogue of the works of the Italian composer. I can explain the matter to them. In 1809, Rossini, at that time a student in the Academy of Bologna, composed, for the concert given on the occasion of the distribution of prizes, two pieces for orchestra, which (like the *Pianto d'Armonia*) were never printed. These pieces were:—

1. *Sinfonia a più istrumenti obbligati.*
2. *Sinfonia concertante.*

The programme of the concert containing these two compositions was put into my hands; these works, however, are not actually symphonies, but overtures more or less developed.

Let us now turn to the manuscript score of the *Barbiere*. This precious score was brought to me as though it had been sacred, with religious respect; it was taken from a cabinet, a very tabernacle, to which the librarian only has a key. The manuscript is kept in two morocco cases fitting one into the other. It would take too long here to relate the series of circumstances in consequence of which the manuscript of the *Barbiere*, given to Rome in 1816, finally became the property of the musical library at Florence. The paper on which the splendid and powerful Italian genius wrote such a miracle of grace and animation contains twelve staves and no more. Time, which has left no trace on the ever-youthful melodies of the *Barbiere*, has rendered the paper on which they are written yellow and withered, so that at first sight it looks like an old parchment. Rossini's handwriting was at that time large and firm. What a contrast between the thought of the musician, rapid as the lightning, and the characters which represented it!

The score of the *Barbiere* contains no overture,* and the recitatives, although composed by Rossini, are not in his hand-writing. It is curious to note that in the whole of this work there is but one erasure; but that one is most interesting. I will not do my readers the injustice to suppose them unacquainted with the *ritornello* of Figaro's grand air. Well, after the four bars at the end,

 , &c., Rossini had continued thus:—



and finished up with the well-known two bars at the end. But no sooner had the composer traced these eight bars than, perceiving that they were too long, he effaced them. He was so convinced of this that he suppressed them at once, without even writing the accompaniment. Is not this an interesting correction?

F. E. O.

* The one always given as the overture to the *Barbiere* having been originally written for the opera of *Aureliano in Palmira*.—Translator's note.

Foreign Correspondence.

MUSIC IN NORTH GERMANY.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

LEIPZIG, February, 1875.

If we were to give but a small notice of all the musical events which have taken place at Leipzig during the last month, we should require considerably more space than is allotted to us in these columns. We must therefore restrict ourselves to the most important doings, and leave unnoticed much that is good and praiseworthy.

At the concert given by the Pauliner Sang-Verein, we heard a capital performance of a living composer's finest and most conspicuous work, the *Scenen aus der Frithjof Sage*, by Max Bruch. The solo-parts were excellently rendered by Herr Gura (Frithjof) and Mlle. Gutzschbach (Ingeborg). The chorus sang enthusiastically, and the Gewandhaus orchestra accompanied. Bruch's *Frithjof*, which appeared more than ten years ago, has been often acknowledged as a distinguished work. This acknowledgment was brought about less by the press, than by musicians who took part in its performance, and who praised the work of the young master. Much has been written and said about the *Frithjof*; we, however, never found that the work was sufficiently valued, or that its merits were acknowledged to their full extent. It was well received, it was praised, but nobody seemed to think it a work of particular importance. Although we have great respect for many of the musical novelties which have appeared within the last ten years, yet we must pronounce Bruch's *Frithjof* to be the most important choral work of our time, and for this reason we feel compelled to speak more fully about it. From the depth of the music and the unity of the composition, it is evident with what powerful conception Bruch has taken in the peculiar subject of the poem. The first scene, "Heimfahrt," produces in the instrumental introduction a fresh and lively picture, on which the still finer monologue by Frithjof and the chorus of his companions follow with always increasing effect. "Ingeborg's Brautzug" is deeply touching, in its sinister, painful, and resigned mood. The following (third) scene—containing Frithjof's revenge, burning of the Temple, and the curse of priests and people—is truly dramatic, great in its construction, bold in expression, and of grand effect up to the climax of the finale in E flat minor. The fourth scene, "Frithjof's Abschied von Nordland," offers a very advantageously situated contrast to the preceding number. Ingeborg's touching complaint (Scene V.), with its deep melancholy and sorrowful resignation, follows. A great and important finale to the whole is formed by the sixth scene, "Frithjof auf der See."

Although we do not think *Frithjof* the production of a very great genius, we yet must acknowledge that we have before us the best work which the great and highly-gifted artist has written up to the present time. A fresh and healthy vein pervades the whole composition; in no parts does it appear to us a laboured or intellectual work; on the contrary, the whole seems to have been unconsciously conceived and to have sprung from pure and spontaneous inspiration. The character of the music in *Frithjof* is something quite peculiar. Neither in style, construction of movements, nor in the voice parts and the orchestra, does the young author imitate Mendelssohn or Schumann, who are the only great composers who have written larger works for male voices with orchestra. He does not copy or plagiarise any work, but gives in *Frithjof* a composition inspired by the peculiar text of the Northern

legend, which he musically reproduces. Whatever is different in *Frithjof* to other similar choral works, takes its origin in the poetical text of the work. Free from unnatural and far-fetched matter, *Frithjof* is a masterpiece.

At the same Pauliner concert, a small but very effective and fine composition for chorus and orchestra was played for the first time. This was "Gebet auf den Wassern," by Gustav Erlanger. Herr Erlanger is still a young composer: his work was well received by the public and the critics. Amongst many other unaccompanied choruses for men's voices, a quartet by Max Zenger, composer of the oratorio *Cain*, distinguished itself highly. It is called "Doerpertanzweise," and is certainly one of the very best quartets for male voices lately composed.

The last four Gewandhaus concerts produced, as novelties, a fine violoncello-concerto by Raff, which we consider a very judicious enrichment of the repertoire for the violoncello. This concerto, as well as three small solo-pieces, were played in a highly finished manner by Herr Friedrich Grützmacher, from Dresden. On the same evening (at the twelfth Subscription concert) Fr. Wilhelmine Gips sang Beethoven's concert-aria "Ah perfido," and songs by Schubert and Schumann, very correctly and neatly, but without being able to leave any deep impression. Haydn's D major symphony (No. 2 of Breitkopf and Härtel's Edition) and Gade's finest overture, "Im Hochland," were the successful orchestral performances of the evening. At the thirteenth Gewandhaus concert, the greatest interest was taken in the performances of the well-known Italian pianist, Alfonso Rendano, from Naples, who, after his brilliant concert tour in Italy, accepted an invitation from the Leipzig concert-directors, and played Chopin's F minor concerto and pieces by Mozart and Scarlatti. We have often before praised the excellent accomplishments of this young and highly-gifted virtuoso. Herr Rendano again received the applause due to him. As singer of the evening, the Leipzig public became acquainted, for the first time, with Fr. Minnie Hauck. But it appears to us that the stage is more suitable than the concert-room for showing off all the advantages bestowed by nature on this lady. Her accents were too marked, and her manner of performing somewhat affected. The lady sang the aria of Susanna, "Endlich nahest sich die Stunde" ("Deh vieni, non tardar"), from Mozart's *Figaro*, the well-known song "Mignon" by Liszt, and a mazurka by Chopin, without being well-received by either public or critics. Two highly classical works, Cherubini's overture to the *Abencerragen* and Beethoven's B flat symphony, at the beginning and end of the programme, gave the orchestra ample opportunities of unfolding all its so often praised good qualities.

The fourteenth Gewandhaus concert received a particularly festive appearance from the presence of His Majesty King Albert of Saxony. The concert was opened with the D major symphony by Philipp Emanuel Bach—the most celebrated son of Sebastian Bach. After this, the St. Thomas Choir sang the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei, from the vocal mass by E. F. Richter (the Leipzig St. Thomas-cantor), exceedingly well, under the direction of the composer. The new mass, only printed a year ago, by this well-known theorist, is a very admirable and noble work. Our honoured singer, Mme. Schimon-Regan, sang "L'Absence," a very unimportant concert song from the "Summer Nights" by Berlioz, and three songs by Schubert. The song by Berlioz, although it has been in print for forty years, was new to the Leipzig Gewandhaus public, and gained no sympathy. We know many finer songs in the "Summer Nights," and should have felt ourselves more obliged to Mme. Regan for

"Villanelle," from Op. 7 (No. 1), or for "La Captive" by Berlioz. Between the vocal numbers the Entr'acte and the "Rufung der Alpenfee" from Schumann's wonderful work *Manfred*, and at the end of the concert Mendelssohn's A minor symphony, were performed.

At the fifteenth Gewandhaus concert, we heard Mendelssohn's overture to the comic opera, *The Wedding of Camacho*. It is known that this youthfully fresh work was written by the author when sixteen years of age, but it shows already the most complete master and clear traces of Mendelssohn's later developed genius. A morning hymn for female chorus and orchestra by Hermann Zopff, which followed the overture by Mendelssohn, was coldly received by the public. This novelty gave us the impression of being the effort of an amateur. Two songs for female choruses, with horn and harp accompaniments by Brahms, also found no favour. Between the choruses, Herr Robert Hausmann, from Berlin, a violoncellist, unknown to us, played Lindner's superficial violoncello-concerto, and later a very fine sonata in D minor by Corelli. In the last-named piece, the young artist showed excellent qualities, particularly fine tone and good musical feeling. Robert Schumann's third symphony in E flat major, called the "Rhenish," was excellently played at the end of the concert, and enthusiastically received by the public. It took a long time, almost a quarter of a century, before the two symphonies in C major (No. 2) and in E flat major (No. 3) took their due place in concert repertoires. We well remember the evenings, when the repeated performances of these two beautiful masterpieces did not make the slightest impression on the public, and were afterwards spoken of by the critics of the day in a mocking or contemptuous tone. Arthur Schopenhauer says truly, that genius is always in advance of its age, and that only later generations are sufficiently educated to understand it. This is also the case with Schumann, who for a long time was not understood. The conductors of the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts (particularly Julius Rietz) have the distinguished merit of having brought about the due appreciation of Schumann's works. Without taking notice of all the opposition made by the public as well as the critics of the day, they repeatedly produced the most elaborate and deepest of Schumann's compositions, until these were properly valued.

Two Chamber-music soirées at the Gewandhaus were also very interesting. In the first we had a repetition of the charming octett (Op. 166) in F major for string instruments, clarinet, bassoon, and horn, by Franz Schubert, heard last year for the first time. Mozart's E flat major quintett for piano, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn—this beautiful piece, a gem without fault, was excellently performed. Reinecke undertook the piano part. The Beethoven E minor quartett (from Op. 59) was equally well executed. The second quartett evening produced Beethoven's B major quartett, Mozart's E flat major quartett, and Schubert's B major trio (Op. 99). Concertmeister Schradiek undertook the first violin, and executed his part artistically and with good understanding. The ensemble left nothing to be desired. Reinecke took part in the trio. The Riedel'sche Chorus Society gave, on the 31st of January, an excellent performance of sacred choruses in chronological order, beginning with Frescobaldi, Anerio, Vittoria, and Durante, down to the composers of the present day, and ending with the Kyrie and Gloria of the above-mentioned vocal mass by Ernst Friedrich Richter.

A second volume of this master's excellent theoretical instruction-books on "Counterpoint," in a second edition, augmented with a great many excellent examples, has just appeared at Breitkopf and Härtel's.

MUSIC IN VIENNA.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

VIENNA, February 12th, 1874.

THE number of concerts we have had during the four last weeks is small (carnival having reigned), but their character was the most heterogeneous. There was the concert of Fräulein Anna Mehlig, who, in spite of the co-operation of Frau Sophie Menter and her husband (Popper), and of Director Hellmesberger, was not able to fill the concert-room, the public being somewhat capricious regarding the much-used piano. And yet the programme was interesting enough, finishing with Liszt's "Concert Pathétique" for two pianos. Fräulein Mehlig was, however, much applauded, and has the courage to risk another concert to-morrow. The other day Herr and Frau Joachim gave a concert in the Musikvereins-Saal. What a difference! All seats taken, and even the simple entrance-tickets not equal to the demand. Director Brahms co-operated, and as the last number, Beethoven's quatuor in C major, Op. 59, was performed by Joachim, the two Hellmesbergers (the father playing the viola), and Röver, the excellence of the execution can easily be imagined. It remains only to give the programme, consisting of Bach's sonata in E major (with violin), sonata by Tartini, sarabande and tambourin by Leclair, romance by Joachim, Hungarian dances by Brahms-Joachim, and songs by Schubert, Schumann, and Brahms, of which "Lust der Sturmnacht" (Schumann) and "Sandmännchen" (Brahms) were redemanded, as also the Hungarian dances. The applause on that evening was as warm as continuous, and found its summit with the last note of the quartetto. Once more we heard the Joachims in the fifth Philharmonic concert, Herr Joachim performing in his pure artistic style the 7th concerto by Spohr and a chaste nocturno of his own composition; Frau Joachim singing in the bright Handelian style the aria of Dejanira from *Hercules*. The same evening both artists left Vienna, and it is only to be hoped that we shall not have to regret their absence from this city for another seven years. Three so-called Trio-Soirées by Professor Door were interesting on account of many novelties (at least new for Vienna); of two compositions by Saint-Saëns from Paris, a trio and a sonata with 'cello, the latter was interesting from its grand style; a sonata with violin by Edvard Grieg was no less worthy once hearing from its peculiar northern character; a sonata for two pianos by Ig. Brüll will no doubt become a favourite for duo-players,—it is a noble, fresh composition, free from any gnawing agony. There remains still to mention the great Wagner-concert for the benefit of the Bayreuth enterprise. Herr Hans Richter, who is to be the conductor of that glorious enterprise, was also here the leader, coming expressly from Pesth. The orchestra was that of the Philharmonic; the great Musikvereins-Saal filled to the last seat, the execution being in every way excellent. We heard three numbers by Wagner; Huldigungsmarsch, Prelude, and Finale from *Tristan und Isolde*; "Wotans Abschied" and "Feuerzauber" (*Walküre*). Though not new for Vienna, the numbers were heard with great interest, the "Feuerzauber" particularly admired as a piece of magic lustre. The last and lengthy number was Liszt's "Faust-symphonie," consisting of three parts, Faust, Gretchen, Mephisto, and a final chorus. It would be impossible to give a description of that composition in a few words; it can only be stated that the impression was painful enough. The employment of all kind of instruments was not able to cover the want of invention. It is certainly not agreeable to state—with respect to a man of great spirit and merit—such a lamentable result, but the disillusion was too strong. The

audience would have given its disapproval in a manner less delicate than only leaving the room *en masse* long before the end of the last piece, if the conductor had not been a visitor. And here it is the more pleasing to speak of Herr Richter as of a man who knows to unite as conductor strictness, firmness, and an imposing self-contained demeanour. It will interest you to hear that his father was a very good musician, composer, and singer in the musical chapel of the Prince Esterházy; that he settled afterwards at Raab in Hungary, where the son was born; and that his mother sang, in October, 1857, the Venus in the first Vienna representation of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* (Theatre Josephstadt). On March the 1st we shall have another Wagner-concert, but with Wagner himself as conductor. The programme consists of the "Kaisermarsch" and three fragments from the *Götterdämmerung* (the third evening of the *Ring des Nibelungen*)—namely, (1) Grosses scenisches Vorspiel; (2) Siegfried's Tod; (3) Schluss-scene des letzten Aktes. Herr F. Glatz, from Pesth, the performer of Siegfried, and Frau Materna will sing.

Before speaking of the theatres let me say a few words about the violinist, Leopold Jansa, who lived many years in London. He died on the 25th of last month, seventy-nine years old. He had been member of the Imperial Hofcapelle from 1825 till 1851, when he was dismissed for having played in London in a concert for the benefit of the Hungarian refugees. He was rehabilitated some years ago, and performed once more, and for the last time, in March, 1871, the leading violin in a quartetto by Beethoven. His merit it was to have continued the public performances of quatuors in Vienna which were interrupted by the death of Schuppanzigh.

To speak of the theatres is at present an unpleasant task; they all struggle against the same evil—small income. Without regard to the Stadt-theater, which cannot live nor die, the two Hoftheater are anxious to get out of a too serious deficit; the "Komische Oper" exists only nominally; it has changed its director, who found it better to dismiss the opera-singers. Once more Frä. Minnie Hauck sang the Rosine, passing through Vienna, and once more Frau Lucca, having finished her engagement in the Hofoper, sang Frau Fluth, taking leave of Vienna. That evening (28th of January) was the last opera representation—it is all over with it—poor singers are the sufferers, and are to be pitied. Another theatre, the smallest and youngest, the Strampfer-theatre, is closing at the end of February, the directrix, the famous Frä. Gallmeyer, engaged as member of the ci-devant Komische Oper; the house itself, once the Musikverein and Conservatoire, will be sold. Regarding the Hofopera, I am sorry that space allows me at present only to speak in a few words of the new comic opera, *Der Widerspänstigen Zähmung* (*The Taming of the Shrew*), the libretto after Shakespeare by Widmann, the music by Hermann Goetz, a composer from Königsberg, but living near Zürich. The opera was performed with much care; Director Herbeck conducted in *propria persona*; all the singers, the orchestra, and the chorus did their best, and every hearer was obliged to confess to having heard the music of a respectable composer, a real noble talent. Herr Goetz has profited from the new direction in music, and, upon the whole, it could be said, in a figurative sense, we have before us the *Meistersinger* in the waistcoat pocket. Besides, one thing is suspicious: the music is too serious for a comic opera, and the light pleasing melody is its feeble side. Therefore the opera, I fear, will not become popular, and that is now-a-days more than ever a matter of life and death with a dramatic composition. Nevertheless, as a first specimen, and elaborated with such care and taste in all its parts, the

work is worth the highest praise. A second hearing could only confirm the good opinion and attest its merit. List of the operas performed since the 12th of January:—*Mignon* (twice), *Prophet* (twice), *Jüdin*, *Don Juan*, *Aida* (twice), *Lustigen Weiber von Windsor*, *Fra Diavolo*, *Rienzi*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Freischütz*, *Robert der Teufel*, *Oberon*, *Dom Sebastian*, *Norma*, *Der Widerspänstigen Zähmung* (twice), *Hugenotten*, *Nordstern*, *Romeo and Julie*, *Tannhäuser*, *Troubadour*.

Correspondence.

FREDERIC CHOPIN.

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

SIR,—A letter appears in your issue of this month, on the works of Chopin, which is, I presume, intended as an answer to the article on the same subject in the January number. To write didactically on such a subject (within the limits of an ordinary letter) is a very difficult task; one is apt to say too little or too much, and in either case give a different impression from that intended.

There is no doubt that certain writers require a greater affinity of mind, in those who seek to know them, than others; and those who are wanting in that quality would do well to remember the old proverb, "Speech may be silver, but silence is golden." If your correspondent in this month's number is anything of a pianist, I feel sure he could not have intended to convey the impression that he was (as it were) throwing cold water on the enthusiasm generally felt by musicians in favour of the writings of the "pale wizard," as Chopin has been called.

Your January correspondent commences by quoting the theory that all genius is radically the same. This proposition has been advanced by several writers, and is, in the main, I fancy, accepted by most thinkers; but he might have gone further, and said that great genius reflects, in its deeds, the age in which it exists, being coloured, as it were, by that, and the individuality of its own personal life. Is it not metaphysical Shelley who says

"Life, like a dome of many coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity?"

The Elizabethan age, with its strange mixture of heroism, romance, and strong common sense, alchemy and astrology, delicacy and rudeness, produced a *Shakespeare*, a *Bacon*, and a *Raleigh*—(Query, would these men have left us the same monuments of their genius, had they lived now?) True genius, in all ages, from the time of Moses to the present levelling day, is the same—the "race of the prophets" cannot be judged by a two-foot rule, nor even by one another—for each is great unconsciously.

Therefore it is most unjust to judge of genius by comparison; its value lies in itself, and it can only be judged fairly when this is borne in mind. Whether we roam in the fields of literature, painting, or music, it is ever the same. Each of those *High Priests of Art*, who at times speak to the world, has within him a divine spark of the Eternal Truth, without which his works would not only be valueless, but would, by the inevitable law of Time's justice, die away completely. As to the form in which this spark appears, it must undoubtedly depend on, or at any rate be biased by, surrounding circumstances, in much the same way as a man is a Turk, a Chinese, or an Englishman, through his national birth and bringing up. To our limited vision, and with our bigoted notions, the Englishman may appear, the one, "*par excellence*;" not so to the higher judge, who sees in each, equal manhood, equal claim on the divine justice.

Truth is at all times the same, and equally noble, whether coming from the lips of a little child, confessing its own fault to save another from blame, or from the grown man speaking "on oath" in the witness-box, even to his own shame. Granted, that the one or the other may claim our sympathy more, but that must be from the surrounding circumstances or personalities, and cannot alter the truth, as truth.

In the same way as the "little things" in our lives often please us, or try us the most, and generally indicate our natural weaknesses or strength, so a small work of art will often show as much ideal power and real creative genius, as one clothed in more elaborated form, and I agree with your correspondent of last month (January) in instancing Beethoven's "*Adelaide*" as quite worthy of ranking with any of that composer's inspirations. In the same category with the great "*Tone Poet's*" song, I would instance some of Schubert's songs, not a few of Mendelssohn's *Lieder*, and

some of the standard national melodies, all of which speak to us with the same power, and force us to recognise the depth of wisdom shown by the great statesman who is reported to have said, "Let me write the ballads of a nation, I care not who makes its laws."

Do not both the telescope and the microscope reveal to us equal worlds of marvel? Does not the hand of the Almighty show itself the same in the rose or the lily of the valley, as in the mountain torrent or the glacier of the Alps?

To place *original creative idea* as inferior to the mere form in which it is brought forward, is, to my thinking, much the same as regarding a man's clothes to be more valuable than his brains. Perhaps "Sartor Resartus" would tell us that such is too often the truth, as the world wags. Well, I can only say, "*tant pis pour nous*."

In the present day, that has been termed "the educational day," mere learning is too often regarded as genius. I would not for a moment undervalue the great importance of learning, without which genius itself is but half developed. Learning may add much to the lustre of genius, but it cannot create like its greater brother. No one will deny that we have a great number of clever and well-educated men in the present day, but the original genius, is he not as rare as ever? I must not, however, rhapsodise any longer.

Your correspondent says, "Chopin confined himself to writing for one instrument and (with few exceptions) to the minor and less important forms of art." But the instrument he wrote for is the one *universally called* the "household orchestra," an instrument that has done more in the cause of civilisation (musically speaking) than all others put together. By this I of course do not in the least derogate from the importance and powers of any other instrument, but the keyboard has—from the first introduction of the organ, through the different ages that have produced its modifications, the virginals, clavicord, harpsichord, and spinnet, and lastly the piano—always held an important and prominent position, from the fact that by its aid the thoughts of all classes of composers can be brought home to us in our rooms.

As a musician, we have but to turn to Chopin's existing works and we can scarcely deny his energetic and really original genius. "Throughout his entire writings we never find a hackneyed phrase, an unfinished thought, a commonplace expression, or a suggestion of anything wanting in skill or knowledge." All seems to flow from his pen unhesitatingly, as if he spoke, simply because he could not help it, which is the truest test of original power.

The harmonic progressions in his preludes prove that he either intuitively knew, or had carefully studied the old school of harmony. "His wonderful studies contain everything necessary and even conceivable in difficulty, and in many points present peculiarities of execution that were not known before his day, but that since have become acknowledged and embodied in the modern school of playing."

His second concerto, the grand sonata in B flat minor, his third scherzo (specially) the tarantelle, and besides these a host of others, as *valse*, *polonaise*, and *ballades*, all strongly forbid his being placed in the rank of a *minor musician*, even if he had not written his strikingly original mazurkas, or those delicious nocturnes that launch one into a dream of Fairyland. These last may be considered as his lesser writings, but they surely rank much higher than the "class of music to which we apply the epithets *pleasing*, *charming*," whose "*charm is at best evanescent*," &c. However, "*De gustibus non est disputandum*," and, as the farmer said, "There are cabbages and there are cabbages."

All the greatest musicians, writers, and artists of his day have testified to their opinion of his high merits as a great poet, musician, and original thinker. Undoubtedly, some of his works are "sealed books" to those who have not the capacity to understand or else want the patience to unlock the door. But the same may be said of many of Beethoven's later works, and those of others; and that Chopin's works are not of an evanescent character is fully proved by the fact that now, twenty-five years after his death, the demand for them is greater than ever. Our best teachers always introduce his works to their pupils, and the programmes of our most eminent pianists constantly contain his name.

I have been led to make these remarks, not because I disagree altogether with your correspondent, whose love for the higher forms of classical music must be shared in by all true musicians, but because I claim for Chopin a higher rank than that allowed in the letter of "J. S. S." As a writer for the piano, I class him with the other three kings—Beethoven, Weber, and Mendelssohn. As a genius, with Swedenborg and Shelley. The same peculiar facility of uncommon expression, the same dreamy, mystic power of inspiration, the same daring originality mark them; and each require the same key to unlock them, a *sympathetic appreciation of the beautiful*.

I would not compare Beethoven and Chopin any more than I

would Shakespeare and Shelley, or Coleridge; but because I *bow* to the genius that gave us the great transcendental *Hamlet*, shall I not likewise recognise the genius of *Queen Mab*, or feel my heart elevated by him who wrote

"He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things, both great and small,
For the great God in heaven above,
He made and loves us all."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
Devonshire House, Reading,
Feb. 2nd, 1875.

JOHN OLD.

THE LATE SIR STERNDALÉ BENNETT.

To the Editor of the MONTHLY MUSICAL RECORD.

DEAR SIR,—It has been repeatedly said the deceased was a pupil of Mendelssohn. There was a contradiction of this in the *Times* obituary article. Others may decide the point, but I can give some testimony in support of a denial. Soon after Sir Sterndale's first visit to Germany, he was relating to me what took place between Mendelssohn and himself on his arrival there:—"I said to Mendelssohn, 'What are your terms?' He said, 'I shall not think of giving you lessons.' I well remember these were Sir Sterndale's very words. He told me he played his 'Fountain' to Mendelssohn. 'Mendelssohn made me play it again,' said he; or 'Mendelssohn was so pleased with it, that he made me play it again.' Which-ever of these was the expression used, I felt that Mendelssohn asked for a repetition because he was delighted with the music. I felt too that he was delighted with the player, and with the youth himself.

Yours truly,
Wisbech, Feb., 1875.

J. T. BENNETT.

Reviews.

Christus. Oratorium. Von FRIEDRICH KIEL. Op. 60. Klavierauszug. Berlin: Bote & Bock.

THE subject of the present oratorio, the larger part of which is occupied with the Passion of our Lord, is one which has always possessed special attractions for composers. Among those who have treated it, either as a whole or in part, may be named Bach, in his two great *Passions*, according to Matthew and John; Handel, in his *Passion according to John*, and *Passion of Christ*; Graun, in the *Tod Jesu*; Haydn, in the *Seven Last Words*; Beethoven, in the *Mount of Olives*; Mendelssohn, in his unfinished oratorio *Christus*; Spohr, in his *Calvary*; and Liszt, in the third part of his most recent oratorio, *Christus*. Besides this there are the more indirect treatments of the same subject, such as those in the *Messiah*, and in the various settings of the "Stabat Mater." Any composer, therefore, who essays a new work upon the same theme is inevitably exposed to comparison with his predecessors. From this comparison Herr Kiel has not shrunk; and it is no more than due to him to say, that though his oratorio largely passes over the ground covered by the "Passion Music" of Bach, it is, on the whole, remarkably free from reminiscences.

The work is divided into three parts, and contains in all thirty-three numbers. The first part commences with Christ's entry into Jerusalem, which is followed by the scene of the Last Supper. Part the second contains three scenes—Peter's denial of Christ, Christ before the High-priest, and Christ before Pilate. The third part is devoted to the Resurrection.

The general impression produced upon us by a careful reading of the pianoforte score of this work is one of very great and highly-developed talent rather than of actual genius. Its weak point seems to be deficiency of striking melody. Everywhere we find good flowing music, thoroughly appropriate to the words, and it cannot be said that the work, as a whole, is dry; yet there is not a single theme which dwells in the mind. We do not, of course, imply that a composer is bound to introduce pretty melodies and eight-bar phrases into his music; but in all the greatest masterpieces, whether of oratorio or of other departments of the art, passages will be found which arrest the hearer's (or reader's) attention at once. Possibly repeated hearings of this work might modify the opinion formed merely from careful reading; but at present we must express our conviction that the power of melodic invention is not Kiel's forte. Of course, he is no more responsible for this than he is for the colour of his hair, because the gift of melody is an endowment of nature, and not one of those things which, like facility in counterpoint or skill in thematic development, can be acquired by study and practice. On the other hand, in everything that pertains

to the technique of composition, Herr Kiel shows complete mastery. His vocal part writing is excellent, and his command of polyphony admirable. As may therefore be expected, the choruses are the best portions of the work. The opening "Hosanna," in eight parts—the excellent double fugue, "Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied,"—the six-part fugue, "Wir gingen Alle in der Irre"—and the fugue with a choral, "Wer wird den Tag seiner Zukunft erleiden?" may all be instanced as very fine examples of the composer's skill. In all of them, however (with the exception, perhaps, of "Singet dem Herrn"), it is the treatment rather than the subjects which excite the most interest. So again with the short dramatic choruses in the scene between the Jews and Pilate. Here we cannot but feel that the right key is pitched; the correct expression is in every case given to the words; yet there is a want of that indefinable charm about the music which would rivet the attention of an audience. Special praise should here be given to Herr Kiel for the skill with which, though here and in the preceding scenes treating the identical texts of Bach's *Passion according to Matthew*, he has, with one exception, avoided the slightest trace of a reminiscence. The one exception referred to is the chorus, "Kreuzige ihn" (p. 127), the theme of which so nearly resembles that of Bach's "Lass ihn kreuzigen" as to suggest that the similarity was designed, and that Kiel intended to recall the setting of his great predecessor.

The solo portions of the oratorio are not, on the whole, of very great interest. Here the deficiency of melody above referred to makes itself felt more plainly than in the choruses. Among the most successful of the songs are the opening number of the work, the tenor air "Bereitet dem Herrn den Weg," and the mezzo-soprano solo "Das zerstossene Rohr wird er nicht zerbrechen." A large part of the solo music of the work consists of that hybrid between recitative and air known as *arioso*, and there are but few songs developed at any length. Conciseness, indeed, is one of the prevailing characteristics (and, it may be added, merits) of the oratorio. In the present day, when over-development is the rule, rather than the exception in modern compositions, it is refreshing to meet with a large work which is totally free from the fault of diffuseness.

Kiel's *Christus* must, as a whole, be pronounced a thoroughly musicianly production, which, if it nowhere rises to the height of great genius, yet never sinks below the dignity of its subject, and is certainly above mediocrity. If never very great, it is also never very small.

Bilder aus Osten. Von ROBERT SCHUMANN. Op. 66. Für Orchester bearbeitet von CARL REINECKE. Leipzig: Fr. Kistner.

SCHUMANN'S "Oriental Pictures" are well known to pianists in their original shape as pianoforte duets. As a general rule, pianoforte music is but ill adapted for orchestral arrangement; but there is probably no composer's music for that instrument which would suffer less from the process of adaptation than that of Schumann. The reason for this is to be found in the almost entire absence of what is known as "passage writing." A comparison with the pianoforte music of other composers will perhaps make this clear. No one who was not a candidate for Colney Hatch would think of arranging for the orchestra such works as Mozart's duet sonata in C, or Hummel's duet in A flat. In both these works are to be found abundance of mere pianoforte passages, admirably suited to the genius of the instrument, but suited for no other instrument whatever. Even in pianoforte music, which as a whole is orchestral in form and character, there will in most cases be found certain portions which are unsuited for orchestral transcription. Schubert's great duo in C, Op. 140, is an instance in point. It has been most ably instrumented by Joachim, and, taking it altogether, it makes a very effective symphony; but the finale contains several passages which cannot in the orchestra produce the effect obtained on the piano. Many of Schumann's works, however, contain scarcely a solitary passage of this kind; and the "Bilder aus Osten" are among the number. Herr Reinecke's long experience as conductor of the Gewandhaus concerts at Leipzig, and his great familiarity with orchestral effects, eminently qualify him for the task of adaptation; nor, indeed, could the instrumentation of these little gems have been more judiciously and tastefully done than it has been by the arranger. It is only natural that some of the numbers should be more effective in their new dress than others. Thus the first, fourth, and sixth "come out" best on the orchestra; the second is, as regards its contents, one of the less striking pieces; in the fifth, while the opening portion is well suited for adaptation, the episode in the major is much less so; and the third, which one would have certainly expected to find one of the best pieces, did not, when the whole series was recently played at the Crystal Palace, produce the effect which might have been anticipated. Herr Reinecke's orchestration is very skilful, and never too noisy. In one or two places

one would feel inclined to differ from his treatment; but, on the whole, it is deserving of great praise. In the first number the big drum and cymbals (mostly *pianissimo*), and in the fifth the triangle, are employed with great tact. The trumpets are sparingly, and the trombones not at all used. As the pieces are originally written for the most part in extreme keys, the whole series is transposed for the orchestra a semitone higher—a very judicious change, as not only is greater brightness of effect obtained, but the performance, especially for the wood instruments, is rendered much easier.

A First Book on the Theory of Music. For the use of the Plymouth High School for Girls. By LOUISA GIBSON. London: Moffatt, Paige, and Co.

THE present little treatise contains, within the compass of about a hundred small pages, a large amount of elementary instruction in a very clear and concise form. Its scope will be best understood if we give the headings of the fourteen chapters of which it consists. These are:—1. Keyboard, staff, lines, and spaces. 2. Notes, rests. 3. Dotted notes. 4. Position of the hand and arm, &c. 5. Time. 6. Double-bars, da capo, pause, &c. 7. Legato, slur, tie, staccato, chord, arpeggio, &c. 8. The sharp, flat, natural, signature, accidentals. 9. The appoggiatura, acciaccatura, turn, shake. 10. Notes, rests, accent. 11. Terms and marks of expression. 12. Intervals. 13. Scales. 14. Clefs, transposition, fingering.

It will be seen from this enumeration that the book is designed chiefly for students of the piano. After a careful examination of its contents, we are glad to be able to praise it warmly as not only very intelligible, but for the most part exceedingly accurate. There are, however, two or three little points which have suggested themselves to us in reading, to which we would direct Miss Gibson's attention, not in a captious spirit, but because we think the little work not unlikely to reach a second edition, and feel sure that in that case the authoress would like it to be as perfect as possible. In treating of bars (p. 29), the learner is simply told that "each bar, throughout the piece, must contain the same number of minims, crotchets, quavers, or semiquavers, or their equivalent in other notes." This is, of course, perfectly true; but it leaves out of sight altogether the real use of the bar, which is to show the place of the accent; nor when accent is treated of (p. 62) is the omission more than incidentally rectified. Again, we think that the explanation of the difference between compound-common and triple time might with advantage have been somewhat fuller. If after reading Chapter V. a pupil were asked what is the exact difference between a bar of $\frac{3}{4}$ time and one of $\frac{3}{8}$, supposing each to contain six quavers, we do not feel sure that she would have learnt with sufficient clearness that the former contained three accents in the bar and the latter only two. True, it is stated in the text; but our own experience with pupils is that in general there is no point on which they are more "shaky" than accent and rhythm. The feeling for time is, we think, far more frequently wanting than a sense of tune; and therefore such explanations as that just referred to can hardly be too minute. On p. 57 the beat is described as a trill, and merely called a "very short shake;" the special point—that it consists of three notes only, with the accent on the third—is not mentioned at all. We have one more suggestion to make. On p. 74 we read that "a perfect interval is one which cannot be augmented or diminished without being changed from consonant to dissonant." The definition of these two words, however, is not met with till p. 76; consequently the above statement is unintelligible where it stands. We should recommend that the questions on "consonant" and "dissonant" should be transposed so as to precede that of "perfect" intervals; the matter would then be quite clear. As we have said above, we make these suggestions not for the sake of fault-finding, but because the little book is so good that it is worth while to make it even better. Had we thought less highly of it we should not have troubled ourselves to point out its few shortcomings. Fortunately they are not such as to detract from the value of the work, because an intelligent teacher can easily supply them for himself; and to intelligent teachers we have much pleasure in recommending the treatise.

SHEET MUSIC.

INSTRUMENTAL.

Romanza, for Violin or Violoncello and Pianoforte, Op. 34. *Sehnsucht*. Impromptu for Violin or Viola and Pianoforte, Op. 35. *Mélodie Strieuse*, pour Violon, avec accompagnement de Piano, ou d'Orgue-Mélodieux. By W. H. GRATTANN. (London: John Hart.) There is by no means too great an abundance of what may be called drawing-room music for the violin, which is asy enough to be within the reach of average amateurs. Mr.

Grattan's three unambitious little pieces will therefore be welcome to the class of players to whom we are alluding. A flowing and natural style of melody characterises all of them; the themes, if not showing any striking individuality, are pleasing, and their treatment musically; the violin part lies comfortably for the player, and the piano accompaniment is not degraded to a mere humdrum on tonic and dominant. Amateurs will find these pieces serviceable on occasions where there is "a little music," but when a Mozart or Beethoven sonata would be out of place.

Incidental Overture, for the Pianoforte, by HERBERT BAINES (Duncan Davison and Co.), is, we are sorry to say, by far the worst composition of Mr. Baines's that we have yet seen. In the first place its form is bad. It begins in F, and ends in A minor; besides this, there is no unity about the work. The subjects, so far as we can discover, have no possible relation to one another; and the composer's inventive power seems at intervals to fail him altogether, and the music comes to a dead stand-still with a number of semi-breves in the middle of an *allegro*. But the harmony is worst of all; not only is it frequently very crude, but consecutive fifths and octaves are in places painfully prominent. We wish Mr. Baines "better luck next time."

Impromptu, for the Pianoforte, by CHARLES HENRY SHEPHERD (Stanley Lucas, Weber, and Co.), is a well-written piece in the free scherzo form. An *allegro* in A minor opens with a well-defined subject, which is clearly treated; though there is one passage (the *f* in octaves in the last line but one of p. 4) the effect of which is rather vague, the tonality being very undecided. The episode in *x* (*andante non troppo*) is in good contrast with the chief theme.

Les Papillons, pour Piano, par NAPOLEONE VOARINO (Cramer and Co.), is a pleasing little drawing-room piece of very moderate difficulty. The composer, we learn from the title-page, is pianist to the Queen of the Belgians.

Valis Reverie (No. 1 of Five Musical Sketches), by JOHN MILTON TARBOLTON (Birmingham: Adams and Beresford), displays more taste and musical feeling than are to be found in the average of new waltzes, though the piece suffers in parts from too long persistence in one rhythm, as for instance on the fourth and fifth pages.

No. 2 of *Original Sketches*, for the Piano, by WESTLEY RICHARDS, Op. 8 (Lamborn Cock), puzzles us as to why in the world it should be called a "Sketch." It is in reality an exceedingly well-written first movement of a sonata, constructed and developed in strict form, and on the whole one of the best pieces from Mr. Richards's pen that we have yet met with. Was he afraid to publish it as part of a sonata for fear of frightening the unmusical public?

The Drushkee Galop, by C. H. R. MARRIOTT (Cramer and Co.), is an effective piece of dance-music.

VOCAL.

Three Sacred Songs, by BERTHOLD TOURS (Duncan Davison and Co.), are all excellent, and may rank with the best of Mr. Tours's compositions. We confess to not liking the consecutive fifths in the accompaniment of the "Chapel" (No. 2), which are evidently designedly introduced; but with this reservation the song pleases us much. Our favourite, however, is the third, "Vale of the Cross," which is really a very charming song. No. 1, "Faith," though good, is to our mind less striking than the other two.

At the Eastern Gate; King Baby, Songs, by BERTHOLD TOURS (Evans and Co.), are far inferior to the three sacred songs just noticed. This, we think, rather a proof of Mr. Tours's artistic feeling; because the words of both are very poor—we are almost tempted to say "silly," and it shows that Mr. Tours can only write in his best form when he has words to set which are really worth setting.

Ad Chloen ("To Chloe"), Ode, by HORACE, set to music by CHARLES SALAMAN (Cramer and Co., and Lamborn Cock). Two versions of this song are before us: one with the original Latin text, and the other with Lord Lytton's translation. Mr. Salaman has surmounted the difficulty of adapting the peculiar Latin metre to music with great skill, and has produced a very pleasing and effective song. It goes rather better, we think, with the original words (to which we should think it was written) than with the translation; but the latter will probably be preferred by the majority of singers.

Edith's Bird; In the Night, Songs, by CLEVELAND WIGAN (Augener and Co.). The first of these is a pleasing and unpretending little song calling for no special notice. The second is of more importance. It is not only well written, but has much distinctive character about it. We like it greatly.

Little (The Blind Girl's Song), by J. E. MALLANDAINE (Cramer and Co.), is a simple little ballad, which will probably be familiar

to some of our readers as being sung by Miss Emily Fowler in *The Two Orphans* at the Olympic Theatre.

The only point worthy of notice in *The Coast Guard*, Song, by G. P. NORMAN (Cramer and Co.), is the life-like picture of a coast-guardman on the title.

Lucette, Romance, with French and English words, by G. SEZ-PETTE (Cramer and Co.), is a pretty and piquant song of the ordinary false pattern, which, if well sung, will be sure to please from its "taking" melody.

We have also received sundry part-songs and hymn tunes by various composers. After carefully reading them all through we can find nothing worthy of note in any of them. It is therefore unnecessary to catalogue their names.

Concerts, &c.

CRYSTAL PALACE.

BEETHOVEN's Mass in C, No. 2, in which the principal parts were sustained by Miss Blanche Cole, Miss Julia Elton, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Mr. Lewis Thomas, took the place of the usual symphony at the fourteenth concert. The only novelty, but a pleasing one, was Herr Reinecke's arrangement for orchestra of Schumann's "Bilder aus Osten," a series of six *impromptus*, originally written in 1848 as pianoforte duets, in which form they have long been favourites with Schumann's admirers. They owe their existence, as Schumann has himself told us, to the impression which a reading of Rückert's *Makaman*—a series of tales from the Arabic of Harari—made upon him. In their orchestral form they were first heard at Leipzig towards the close of last year. Mr. Manns has therefore lost no time in bringing them forward. That he should have given the preference to them rather than to some work of Schumann's originally written by him for orchestra, with which he has not yet familiarised his audience, is probably due to their intrinsic beauty, which is so great and self-apparent that it could hardly fail to appeal to every hearer. Other items of interest were Mr. Sullivan's overture "In Memoriam," composed for the Norwich Festival of 1866, and Brahms's variations for orchestra on a theme of Haydn's, which, it will be remembered, were so warmly received on their production here in March last, that a repetition of them was at once demanded for a subsequent concert.

The fifteenth concert was signalled by the first appearance here this season of Herr Joachim, whose annual visit to us at this period has for many years past been looked for as a matter of course, and is still regarded as one of the most welcome changes of the year. To his instigation we are indebted for the first hearing of many a fine work by Schumann, Brahms, &c. On the present occasion he came forward with the recitative, *adagio*, and *allegro* from Spohr's concerto, No. 6, and a new composition of his own—a nocturne in A (Op. 12) for solo violin, with accompaniment for violas, violoncellos, double-basses, oboes, and horns. Like his "Hungarian" concerto, it is a work which will probably be better appreciated on a second hearing than on the first. It is to be hoped, therefore, that an early opportunity of repeating it will be accorded to him. Another novelty, inasmuch as it was heard here for the first time, was Bach's suite in C for an orchestra of strings, with two oboes and a bassoon. It consists of a so-called overture—or a prelude, as we should designate it nowadays—followed by a succession of dances—viz., a courante, two gavottes, a forlane, two minuets, two bourrées, and two passepieds. Though old-fashioned in form, nothing could be fresher in spirit or more invigorating. The symphony was Beethoven's in B flat, No. 4; the vocalists Miss Sophie Löwe and Mr. Henry Guy.

The introduction of a modern suite at the following concert was well devised, inasmuch as it tended to illustrate the great advance which has been made since the time of Bach, both in the development of musical form and in orchestration. This was Franz Lachner's suite in C (No. 6) for grand orchestra (Op. 150). Unlike the same composer's more recent "Ball Suite," which consists of a series of dances still in vogue (polonaise, mazurka, waltz, &c.), this partakes more of the form of a modern symphony, being divided into four movements—viz., an introduction and fugue, an *andante*, a gavotte, and a finale. The introduction and fugue, though trite and old-fashioned, is spirited in effect, while the plaintive character of the *andante* and the liveliness of the gavotte, one of unusual rapidity (*allegro assai quasi presto*), are sharply contrasted. The *finale*, which occupies more than a third of the entire work, consists of funeral music, followed by a brisk march; and, regarded as "programme" music, is doubtless intended to depict a soldier's burial, and the return of his comrades to barracks. Herr Lachner's work

abounds with clever and pleasing devices, but the absence of unity of style and intention between its different movements seems to us to detract much from its worth as an organic whole. The gavotte, the most taking movement, was re-demanded, but its repetition inspired us with no desire to hear it again. Dr. von Bülow's choice of Moscheles' concerto in G minor (Op. 60), composed more than fifty years ago, may have been a surprise to many, inasmuch as he is regarded rather as the champion of the present than of the past, but was nevertheless welcome, firstly, because it is one of the best works of a master who, during the transitional period between Mozart and Liszt, did an immense deal to raise the standard of pianoforte playing; and secondly, because, though familiar enough elsewhere, it had not been heard before at these concerts. Except in the rendering of such works as Liszt's transcriptions of Schubert's waltzes, to the embroidery of which it seems perfectly legitimate to make additions (as he did with exquisite taste at this same concert), it is always Von Bülow's first aim to present his author's works in the manner which he conceives to be most in accordance with their primary intentions. The present was a striking instance in point, for we have it on the authority of Moscheles' widow, whose presence graced this concert, that Von Bülow's rendering of this concerto vividly recalled to her recollection her husband's playing of it in his best days. The overtures were Beethoven's *Egmont* and Mendelssohn's *Melusine*. Mlle. Johanna Levier and Mr. Walsham were the vocalists. The lady made a less favourable impression than on a former occasion of her appearance here; the gentleman, apparently a novice in his art, gave ample proof of his possession of a voice well worth cultivating.

Brahms's pianoforte concerto in D minor, Op. 15, was the chief item of interest for musicians at the seventeenth concert. Though some years have elapsed since it was presented to the musical world, first by himself and subsequently by Mme. Schumann, it has only recently been published in orchestral score. In every respect it is a noble work; but, like many of the grandest conceptions of the greatest masters, is one which only reveals itself in its fullest beauty after conscientious study and repeated hearings. It consists of three movements. The first (*maestoso*), which is sometimes more than akin in spirit to the ninth symphony of Beethoven, is so broadly developed and so grandiose in character, that one cannot but feel that it vividly depicts some tremendous drama—perhaps a scene from the Apocalypse, as awe-inspiring as the Last Judgment. The sublime religious beauty of the second movement is unmistakable; but the third, a rondo in form, and the most individual of the three in character, may be regarded as the most popular, in the best acceptance of the term. Though immensely difficult to perform, full justice was done to it by all concerned, but by none more so than by Mlle. Marie Krebs, who, regardless of difficulties which she had thoroughly mastered, seemed fully to enter into the spirit of the work, which it is much to the credit of her good taste and high courage to have brought forward. The novelty of this concert was the overture to a *Festspiel*—"From Rhine to Elbe"—composed by C. Krebs in celebration of the return of the victorious Saxon troops to Dresden, on the close of the Franco-German War of 1870-71. Brilliant and Weber-like in character, and based principally upon Luther's chorale "Nun danket alle Gott," it must admirably have served the occasion for which it was written; but here its interest for the British public ceases. The other overture was that to Mozart's *Entführung aus dem Serail*; the symphony was Schubert's, in B minor (No. 8, unfinished). The vocalists were Mme. Patey and Mr. E. Lloyd; who contributed airs from Bennett's *Woman of Samaria*, and songs by Gounod and Sullivan.

MONDAY AND SATURDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

WHETHER designedly or by accident, it has several times of late happened that Mr. Chappell's Saturday afternoon programmes have been of such surpassing interest, that many of the regular attendants of the Crystal Palace concerts have given them the preference. One may sometimes regret that two such attractive entertainments should be going on at the same hour, because it is impossible to be present at both; but it would be unfair to make it a cause of complaint that Mr. Chappell sometimes accords the first opportunity of hearing new and important works to his Saturday audience, which as a body must probably be distinct from that of Monday evenings. On the last two occasions of Dr. von Bülow's appearance on a Saturday afternoon, the programmes, so far as he was associated with them, were irresistible. On the one occasion he was heard, alone, in Beethoven's *Variations on an Air in F major*, Op. 34, which are as surprising (each being in a different key) as they are pleasing; with Sig. Piatti, in Chopin's fine sonata in G minor, Op. 65, which had only been once previously given at these concerts; and with Mme. Norman-Néruda, Herr Straus, and Sig.

Piatti, in Brahms's quartett in A major, Op. 26, a work which gains in estimation each time it is heard. On the other occasion Dr. von Bülow came forward with Schumann's "Faschingsschwank aus Wien," Op. 26, for his solo; and, with M. Sainton, was heard in Grieg's sonata in F major. Both works were heard here for the first time. The "Faschingsschwank," one of Schumann's brightest and most genial works, is always welcome, but for once we are constrained to say that the doctor's reading of it was not altogether in accordance with our own preconceived ideas as to how it should be played; and this, we may add, is the feeling of several of his greatest admirers. Grieg's sonata, which is as charming as it is remarkable for its originality, met with so warm a reception, that we cannot but think that Mr. Chappell will do well to lose no time in following it up by the same composer's sonata in G, introduced by Mr. Hallé at one of his "recitals" of last year. On his last appearance on a Monday evening, Dr. von Bülow—to whom we are indebted for so many novelties, as welcome as they have been judiciously chosen—played for the first time here a *Suite des Pièces* in E minor, Op. 72, by J. Raff, the success of which had already been assured at one of his recitals of last year.

To Von Bülow, Herr Joachim has now succeeded as the principal attraction of these concerts. Welcome as he is as the greatest violinist of our day, we cannot but think that he would be even more so to many, were he to exert a greater influence in bringing forward new or unfamiliar works of interest, of which there are plenty craving for a hearing. On his first appearance he was first heard in Schubert's beautiful quartett in D minor. This was heard here for the ninth time. We cannot but feel, therefore, that it might have been advantageously replaced by some other of Schubert's quartetts, of which but three have as yet been heard at these concerts. In correction of a note in the programme-book, from which it appears that Mr. Chappell or his propagandist is only cognizant of four quartetts by Schubert, it seems right to recall the fact that there are nine quartetts by Schubert, including a single movement from a posthumous work in C minor, published in score by Messrs. Peters and Co., of Leipzig. On another occasion Herr Joachim was set down to Beethoven's first quartett. That the presence of so great a player should not more frequently be taken advantage of for the production of some of Beethoven's later quartetts, with the difficulties of which there is no one more competent to cope, certainly seems to us a grave mistake. Among his solos have been the andante and allegro from Bach's sonata in A minor, for which, on being recalled, he substituted the *bourrée* from the same master's sonata in B minor, and (for the seventeenth time at these concerts) Tartini's sonata, "Il Trillo del Diavolo." On one occasion Mr. Franklin Taylor was the pianist; for his solo he made choice of Beethoven's sonata in E flat, Op. 31, No. 3, which he gave with admirable effect, though exception might perhaps be taken to the unusually moderate pace at which he took the second movement (*allegretto vivace*). Roused to emulation, as it appeared to us, by his co-adjutors MM. Joachim, Ries, Straus, and Piatti, he was heard to even better advantage in Schumann's quintett in E flat, Op. 44, which now reached its fourteenth performance at these concerts. On another evening, when Mlle. Marie Krebs was the pianist, the first part of the programme was devoted to works by the late Sterndale Bennett. It included his exquisitely charming "Chamber Trio" in A major—the only one of his concerted works, excepting the sonata-duo for violoncello, which had been previously heard here—the unaccompanied quartett, "God is a Spirit," from *The Woman of Samaria*; and the pianoforte sonata, "The Maid of Orleans." Mlle. Krebs gave a striking proof of her readiness by the efficient manner in which, with MM. Joachim and Piatti, she rendered her part in the trio, and by playing the sonata from memory.

Last Monday's concert commenced with Brahms's sextett, for strings, in B flat, Op. 18, which, on this its fourth performance at these concerts, met with so warm a reception from the audience, that it can hardly fail to be followed in due course by the same composer's sextett in G, in many respects the finer work of the two. Mr. E. Dannreuther was the pianist of the evening, making choice of Beethoven's difficult sonata in A major, Op. 101. His interpretation of this beautifully poetic work, the leading characteristics of which are impassioned tenderness, restless longing, and vigorous determination, was well considered, and at all points highly containing. He was subsequently associated with MM. Joachim and Piatti in Schumann's "Fantasie-stücke," Op. 88, given here for the first time. The work consists of four movements—viz., a romance, humoresque, duet, and march. Each is of exquisite charm, and as the whole work is easy of comprehension, and offers no extreme difficulties in execution, amateurs may thank Mr. Dannreuther for bringing it under their notice. A strikingly fine performance of Haydn's quartett in D minor, Op. 76 (for the twelfth time), closed the entertainment.

MR. HENRY LESLIE'S CHOIR.

THE first of a series of four subscription concerts, which took place at St. James's Hall on the 18th ult., was in many points both interesting and attractive. The programme, which consisted entirely of works by German composers, included Brahms's "Liebes-Lieder," Waltzes; Bach's motett for a double choir, "The Spirit also helpeth us;" a variety of part-songs; and vocal and pianoforte solos. Brahms's Waltzes were thus announced in the programme: "Songs of Love," waltzes for a choir, with an accompaniment for four hands on the pianoforte." In correction of a misapprehension which this might give rise to, it may therefore be remarked that they would more properly have been announced as "Waltzes for the pianoforte (four hands), with vocal parts *ad libitum*." There are eighteen of them in all, and each has its especial charm. Mr. Leslie contented himself with the presentation of six. As pianoforte duets they are complete in themselves, and, except under the very best circumstances, cannot, we think, gain in effect by the addition of voice-parts. That these were designed by their composer to be sung by a quartet of soloists there can hardly be a shadow of doubt. At any rate their effect, sung by the whole choir at a monotonously slow pace, and not in their best style, was very disappointing. On all other occasions throughout the evening, Mr. Leslie's choir gave ample proof of the continued maintenance of its unrivalled efficiency. This was especially noticeable in the spirited and accurate rendering of Bach's enormously difficult motett, and again in Sterndale Bennett's "God is a Spirit," sung, as a tribute to his memory, by the whole choir, but with all the delicacy and feeling of a quartet of accomplished vocalists. Excepting two by J. Blumenthal, all the part-songs were old favourites by Mendelssohn. The two by Blumenthal, entitled "Night" and "Laughing Song," from William Blake's "Songs of Innocence," were performed for the first time. They pleased greatly, and cannot but prove a welcome addition to the repertoire of part-songs. The one, "Night," is remarkable for its novelty of treatment. In the first half of each verse the melody is taken by the sopranos and basses in octaves, the harmony being filled in by the altos and tenors; in the latter half this process is reversed, the melody being assigned to the altos and tenors in unison, while the sopranos and basses, sometimes divided, weave an accompaniment around it. The effect is as pleasing and striking as it is unusual. The other, a "Laughing Song," and a capital exercise in rapid articulation, may be commended for its sprightliness. By no means the least pleasing feature of this concert was the *début*, as a vocalist, of Mr. Leslie's niece, Miss Eva Leslie. This young lady, who for a year or two to come will still be in her teens, has for some time past been studying under Mme. Sainton-Dolby. Though unmistakably nervous at first, she soon overcame this; and then one at once felt oneself in the presence of an artist musically and intellectually gifted by Nature, and who had been trained in an excellent school. Her songs were Schubert's "Ave Maria," and Mendelssohn's "Frühlingslied." The overwhelming applause which followed the latter was as encouraging as it must have been pleasing to her. If her health permit, a bright future seems assured to her. We wish we could give as good an account of Miss Florence May, whose academical style of playing on this occasion in Chopin's "Ballade" in A flat, and in three of Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, disappointed hopes which we had formed on a former occasion of our hearing her.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.

A MORE than usually interesting performance was given by this society on the 5th ult., for, instead of a well-known oratorio, it consisted of three works which had not been given here for several years. They were, Mozart's Mass in C, No. 1; Spohr's Cantata, *The Christian's Prayer*; and Mendelssohn's music to Racine's *Athalie*. Mozart's Mass, though published as No. 1, is one of the last he wrote. It was composed in 1779 for performance at Salzburg by a small choir and orchestra, consisting only of violins (no violas), violoncellos, double-basses, oboes, trumpets, and drums. Sir Michael Costa has shown his admiration for Mozart by the trouble which he has taken to make it available for Exeter Hall by adding violas, clarinets, horns, bassoons, and a contra-bassoon. For our own part, we would rather hear it performed by a choir and orchestra as meagre as that for which it was originally written than in this exaggerated manner, by which whatever was gained in grandeur of effect was lost in delicacy and precision. The text of Spohr's cantata is an amplified paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer by A. Mahlmann. Spohr tells us in his "Autobiography" that he was led to the composition of sacred music by the small success attending his operas. Spohr, however, had no distinct sacred style, and there are many passages in his operas and oratorios which might certainly be interchanged without much damage to either. Though the *Christian's Prayer* contains much that is pleasing and admirable

for its artistic construction, it seldom rises to the desired breadth and dignity of sacred music. This was the more felt by its being immediately followed by Mendelssohn's *Athalie*, the massive character of much of which is so exactly suited for performance on a grand scale. In the two works first named the principal vocal parts were sustained by Miss Edith Wynne, Miss Julia Elton, Mr. Henry Guy, and Mr. Theodore Distin; in *Athalie*, the illustrative verses to which were declaimed by Mr. Ryder, they were undertaken by the two ladies above mentioned, with the addition of Miss Ellen Horne. The performance, though not one of the highest merit, was, on the whole, a tolerably satisfactory one. A word is specially due to Mr. Guy in recognition of the creditable and ready manner in which he undertook an important part at short notice in the place of Mr. Pearson.

ROYAL ALBERT HALL.

THE programmes of these concerts, the number of which has been reduced from six to two in each week, viz., a "popular" concert in each week, and an oratorio or orchestral classical concert in each alternate week, have, since their resumption on the close of the Christmas holidays, been pretty closely restricted to the usual routine of well-worn works. An exception is to be made, however, in favour of those presented by Herr Wilhelm, whose appearance here has proved a special and most attractive feature of these concerts, and who, on several occasions, has come forward with new or unfamiliar works of importance. Among these may be enumerated Wagner's "Albumblatt," F. Hiller's "Concert-stück," and concertos by F. Hégar and Paganini. The band, which is now under the sole direction of Mr. J. Barnby, it is satisfactory to state, has been materially reinforced, and extra time having been gained for rehearsals by a reduction in the number of performances, a more uniform excellence than at first attended these concerts may in future be looked for, and, we hope, a better chance of their proving remunerative.

Musical Notes.

THE prospectus of the coming season (the sixty-third) of the Philharmonic Society offers several novelties. First and foremost is Raff's "Im Walde" symphony, which we hope will not share the fate of the "Lenore," announced last year by this society, but never given. The other works announced for the first time at these concerts are Lachner's suite in D, a symphony by Rubinstein, Brahms's variations on a theme by Haydn, Schumann's overture to *Die Brant von Messina*, Wagner's "Huldigung's March" and his introduction to *Tristan and Isolde*, and Spohr's overture to *Der Zwickhampf*. Besides these several works are promised, which, though not first performances, are but rarely heard. The first concert is fixed for the 18th inst.

MR. WILLEM COENEN's three chamber concerts of modern music take place during the present month, at St. George's Hall. The programmes are fully equal in interest and novelty to those of previous years. The works to be performed are:—String quartets: Brahms, in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2; Svendsen, in A minor, Op. 1. String octet: Svendsen, in A, Op. 3. Piano quartets: A. C. Mackenzie, in E flat; Gernsheim, in E flat, Op. 6; C. J. Brambach, in E flat, Op. 13; Raff's trio in C minor, Op. 102, and his sonata for piano and violin, Op. 73, and Brahms's sonata for piano and violoncello in E minor, Op. 38.

THE fourteenth concert of the Society of Amateur Musicians took place in St. George's Hall, Langham Place, on Thursday, Feb. 11th. The programme included a selection from Handel's *Acis and Galatea*, followed by a number of smaller compositions, both vocal and instrumental. The performance throughout was a very good one. Handel's choruses, especially, were given to perfection, and, to judge from the applause they evoked, were listened to with great satisfaction. Mr. Henry Baumer was the conductor.

THE first concert of the recently-formed Glee and Madrigal Society, Derby, took place on the 9th Feb., and was pronounced by all present to be an unqualified success. The high pitch of perfection attained by the choir in so short a time was a matter of surprise, and the repeated plaudits accorded by the audience must have been most flattering to the conductor, Mr. W. J. Kempton, organist of All Saints'. The vocalists were Mme. Billinie Porter (soprano), Miss F. Armstrong (contralto), Mr. W. B. Ling (tenor), and Mr. Tom Kempton (bass). Mme. B. Porter's exquisite singing was greatly admired. She possesses a pure, flexible voice, which is used with consummate taste; and it is not too much to say that she is justly entitled, as an *artiste*, to the high encomiums paid to her by the press. Miss Armstrong sang very nicely, and went through her portion of the programme satisfactorily. Mr. Ling was evidently suffering from cold,

but his songs were nevertheless well received. Mr. T. Kempton won loud applause by his excellent singing. Three duets, a trio, and a flute solo by Mr. Mawbey, completed an excellent programme. Mr. G. H. Gregory, Mus. Bac., presided at the harmonium, Mr. H. Housley at the piano, and there was a full band.

A VERY successful concert was given in the Public Hall at Ripley, on the 8th Feb., by the Derby Glee and Madrigal Society. Mr. Kempton, of Derby, conducted. The vocalists were Mme. Billinie Porter, Miss F. Armstrong, Mr. W. B. Ling, and Mr. Tom Kempton.

THE Potteries Tonic Sol-fa Choristers gave a very successful miscellaneous concert at Burslem, on the 4th Feb., with Mlle. José Sherrington, Mme. Poole, Mr. Nelson Varley, Mr. Wadmore, Mme. Varley-Liebe (violin), and Mr. Charles Malcolm (pianoforte) as principals. The choir contributed two choral part-songs, one of which, "My old friend John," was not published (arranged as a part-song) until the Monday before the concert, but was accurately and effectively sung on the Thursday evening, after one rehearsal. Mr. Powell, the conductor of the choristers, occupied his accustomed post.

A VERY interesting lecture-concert was given in the Mechanics' Hall, Rotherham, on Tuesday, Jan. 19, by Dr. Spark, of Leeds, on "The vocal gems of English Opera." There was a large and fashionable audience. The lecture was illustrated with some choice selections from the works of Purcell, Arne, Horn, Balfe, Wallace, Bishop, &c., which were executed in capital style by Miss Walker and Miss Taylor, of Leeds, Mr. E. Kemp (tenor) and Mr. Dodds (bass). A unanimous vote of thanks to Dr. Spark for his able lecture brought the proceedings to a close.

THE annual Musical Festival in Edinburgh has taken place, as usual, during the past month, under the direction of Professor Oakeley. Mr. Charles Hallé and his band were again engaged, and three concerts were given. At the first the chief works performed were Mozart's symphony in D, Beethoven's concerto in C minor, and the overtures to the *Naiads* (Bennett), *Richard III.* (Volkmann), and *Rienzi*. At the second (the "Reid" concert), after the indispensable "introduction, pastorale, minuet, and march," by General Reid, were given, Beethoven's symphony in D, Viotti's violin-concerto in A minor (Mme. Norman-Néruda), the overtures to *Athalie*, *Hamlet* (Gade), and *Leonora*, No. 1, and various vocal and instrumental pieces. The third and last concert brought forward Schubert's great symphony in C (No. 9), Liszt's "Les Préludes," the overtures to *Medea*, *Genoveva*, and *La Vestale*, Mendelssohn's "Rondo Brillante" in E flat for piano and orchestra, &c. &c. At a concert given on the 2nd of February, by the Edinburgh Choral Union, Professor Oakeley's "Funeral March," lately reviewed in these columns, was performed with much success. His "Edinburgh March" was also given on the 8th ult., at the Orchestral concert of the Glasgow Choral Union.

THE Dundee Amateur Choral Union gave their second concert of the season on the 16th ult., when Weber's *Praise of Jehovah* (*Jubel Cantata*) and Randegger's *Fridolin* were the works performed. On the following evening the third Orchestral concert took place, Mendelssohn's "Scotch" symphony being the chief feature of the evening.

ON Jan. 30th Mr. John Kinross gave a recital at the Kinnaird Hall, Dundee, with an excellent programme, including Mozart's sonata in E minor, for piano and violin; Beethoven's sonata for the same instruments, in D, Op. 12, No. 1; the "Sonata pathétique," and smaller pieces by Beethoven, Chopin, Schubert, J. P. Gotthard, and Charles Salaman.

THE sale by auction of the stock of music plates and copyrights of Messrs. Hopwood and Crew, just concluded by Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, of Leicester Square, in which the music trade and profession generally have taken considerable interest, is remarkable for the large, and in many cases extraordinary, prices obtained. Among the more prominent may be cited Lot 44, Blamphin's "Dreaming of Angels," £63 10s. (Brewer). 61, the same composer's "Just touch the harp gently," £113 15s. (ditto). 81, "Pretty Swallow," also by Blamphin, £69 (J. Williams). 168, Signor Campana's "Speak to me," £110 (Chappell). 175, "The Scout," by the same composer; this song (rendered famous by the singing of Mr. Santley), after a spirited competition fell to Mr. Morley, jun., at the large sum of £312. Lot 201, Clifton (H.), "As welcome as the flowers in May," £72 (Metzler). 224, Ditto, "It's really very singular," £82 10s. (Ditto). 258, Coote (C.), "Archery Galop," £96 (Ashdown and Parry). 260, Ditto, "Awfully Jolly Waltz," £94 10s. (Ditto). 271, Ditto, "Burlesque Valse," £175 10s. (Ditto). 288, "The Cornflower Valse," £132 (Ditto). 351, Clifton (H.), "Pulling hard against the stream," £67 10s. (J. Williams). 364, Ditto, "Robinson Crusoe," £132 (Ditto). 398, Ditto, "Where there's a will there's a way," £61 10s. (J. Williams). 407, "Wait for the turn of the

tide," £75 (Ditto). 509, Hobson's "Come sing to me," £83 15s. (Ditto). 510, "Complaints, or the ills of life," by the same composer, £85 10s. (Ditto). 527, Howard (R.), "You'll never miss the water till the well runs dry," £165 (B. Williams). 579, Coote's "Just Out Galop," £73 12s. (Chappell). 625, Ditto, "Pretty Bird Valse," £66 6s. (Ditto). 631, Ditto, "Prince Imperial Galop." This lot was knocked down to Mr. J. Williams, amidst considerable applause, for £990, the largest price, we believe, ever obtained for a single piece of dance music. Lot 655, Coote's "Sweetly Pretty Valse," £245 (Chappell). 660, Hobson's "Popular Favourites for the Pianoforte," £412 10s. (Ditto). 682, Buckley's "Come where the moonbeams linger," £157 10s. (Ditto). 684, Clifton (H.), "Very Suspicious," £330 (J. Williams). 686, Ditto, "Folly and Fashion," £72 10s. (Ashdown and Parry). 710, Hunt (G. W.), "The Belle of the Ball," £90 (Bath). 937, Coote, "The Encore Galop," £122 8s., purchased by the Composer. 953, "The Snow-drift Galop," £561, also purchased by Mr. Coote. 974, Coote and Tinney's "Ball Room Album," £110 (Chappell). 1060, Read (J.), "Down by the old mill stream," £78 (Bath). 1152, Thomas (J. R.), "The birds will come again," £153 (J. Williams). 1187, Vane (B.), "I never was meant for the sea," £85 (Bath). 1315, "Fizz Galop," by Tinney, £76 14s. (Chappell). 1325, Robert Coote's "Ball Room Guide," £150 (Willey). Total nearly £15,000.

HERR OTTO PRINIGER, Professor of the violin at Harrow school, who, during the time of his studies at the Royal Academy in Berlin, acted as accompanist to Her Imperial Highness the Crown Princess of Germany, had the honour of performing at the Palace in Berlin, on the 30th December, 1874, before their Imperial Highnesses and a distinguished circle, and met with great approbation.

MR. WILLIAM COENEN writes to correct a statement in the Musical Notes of our January number, referring to the Bath Quartett Society, and to say that he, and not Fräulein Boerngen, played the piano part of the Schubert trio. We willingly make the correction; but it is almost needless to add, that in such cases we are obliged to depend entirely on the programmes forwarded to us by correspondents, and cannot hold ourselves in any way responsible if they should be inaccurate.

MR. KUHE's annual Musical Festival took place at Brighton from the 9th to the 22nd of the past month. An excellent force both of soloists and orchestral performers was, as in previous years, engaged; and among the chief works included in the programmes were Bach's *Passion according to Matthew*, Costa's *Naaman*, Macfarren's *St. John the Baptist*, Gounod's *Gallia*, the *Creation*, the *Messiah*, J. F. Barnett's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Sullivan's "Overture di Ballo," and Benedict's overture to *The Tempest*.

At a recital given on the 3rd of February, in the Pavilion, Brighton, by Mr. E. H. Thorne, a new sonata of his composition for piano and violin, of which the local papers speak favourably, was performed by Mr. Henry Holmes and the composer.

ON Wednesday, the 6th Jan., 1875, the newly-formed Philharmonic Society, Maryport, Cumberland, gave their first concert in the Athenæum. The programme was well selected and included the "Gloria" from Mozart's *Twelfth Mass*; Rossini's "Carnovale"; Whitfield's "In Jewry is God known," and "I will lift up mine eyes." The principals, Miss Lawson, Miss Curwen, Master J. Baxter, Mr. Wells, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Wharton, contributed a number of first-class songs, duets, trios, and received great applause for their careful and effective singing. Miss Thompson's clearness of voice was displayed in her rendering of "Too late, too late," and gave immense satisfaction. The choruses were sung with much spirit by the members of the class, who mustered about forty voices. Mr. C. J. Leithwaite, of Cockermouth, conducted; and Miss E. Adair accompanied on the pianoforte. P. de E. Collin, Esq., occupied the chair. The surplus, after paying all expenses, was handed over to the charity.

ORGAN APPOINTMENTS.—Mr. W. Howell Allchin, Mus. Bac., has been appointed organist and choirmaster of St. John's College, Oxford. Mr. Chas. Forington, to Union Chapel, Islington.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GEORGE H. MUNTZ.—We should have been happy to insert your note, but are unable to do so as it gives neither place nor date of the performance.

A LOVER OF CLASSICAL MUSIC.—We cannot say anything about Herr Peters's intentions. F. David's collection of violin music, entitled "A'te Meister," contain, we believe, exactly what you are seeking, though in a less cheap form than the Peters editions.

J. BOYDELL, A.C.O.—Your first and third questions we are unable to answer. As to your second, we recommend H. C. Banister's "Music," published by Deighton Bell and Co., of Cambridge.

M. C. HALL.—We are unable to answer your question, but recommend you to apply for information to Mr. Barnes, [the teacher of music at the Blind Asylum, St. John's Wood.

All communications respecting Contributions should be addressed to the Editor, and must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer, as a guarantee of good faith.

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" 5, in C sharp minor. Vie orageuse 2 6

" 6, in F sharp major. Si oiseau j'étais, à toi je volerais 2 0

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" 8, in E flat minor. Tu m'attires, m'entraînes, m'engloutis 2 0

" 9, in F major. Jeunesse d'amour, plaisir céleste 2 0

" 10, in E minor. Comme le ruisseau dans la mer se répand 2 6

" 11, in E flat. Dors-tu, ma vie? 2 0

" 12, in B flat major. Plein de soupirs, de souvenirs, inquiet, hélas! le cœur me bat 2 6

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